

# Fresh Water Mermaids

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Summary: Two girls change into mermaids one summer afternoon- this chronicles some of their adventures with some of the people who appear in H2O. Is not related in any way to my other existing H2O fanfic, "Sea Caves of Ireland"- new people, new storyline, same author... Rated T for some of the journal entries.

## 1. Chapter 1

### Prologue:

\_Two girls recently got stranded on the island in the middle of Pyramid Lake, which, as locals know quite well, is banned to the public. They declined interviews, saying that they, a seventh-grader who is starting middle school and a college freshman at UNR were just wanting to go for a short, recreational boat ride around eleven yesterday morning when they got tired of paddling their canoe and stopped at the island to rest. They were rescued by a passing speedboat around two in the afternoon. They did do an interview with the University's newspaper, the Sagebrush. It will appear in tomorrow's edition.\_

"Geez, all that over two girls going to an island? Who would have thought we'd be famous?"

"I don't know Lara. But whatever happens, don't mention that cave. I have a bad feeling about it." With those words, the two girls both remembered the events from the day before- the way that they had suddenly gotten tired when they were really close to the island, the fact that the cell reception had just disappeared within fifty feet of the shore, how they had walked into a cave that was a brilliant green, almost as though the walls were lined with peridots or emeralds. The way that the pool in there had looked so inviting, just begging them to come rest in it. So they did. The water began bubbling, and the cave was suddenly brightly white when the sun came overhead. Both girls looked up at the walls, which were very high and

far away from them. Little pink bubbles appeared around the girls, filling the cave. When the sun was within a couple degrees of being lined up with the cave, the bubbling stopped. Both girls climbed out of the pool.

"Well, that was weird. Wasn't it, Erin?"

"Yeah. Well, we'd better go. I don't want to be late to my first day of summer classes."

"Ok." Lara stood up and went to put her glass in the sink. Their cat, La-a (pronounced "La dash a") ran in front of her, causing Lara to trip over the cat, spilling the remaining milk in her glass. "La-a! What was that for?"

"Meow." The cat went over and drank the milk off the ground.

"No! You will get really gross if you drink that! I'll clean it up!" Lara went and got a paper towel and wet it in the sink. She then picked up the paper towel, and bent down to wipe up the mess. She suddenly turned transparent for less than half a second.

She looked down and screamed. Erin looked up from the book she was reading, and screamed as well. Luckily, neither parent was home- they had bought the girls a condo that was close to the University, and that was where they were staying.

The cause for the screaming was obvious enough- Lara had grown a light pink tail, which was so light it was almost white, but still would be identified as being pink by any sane person. Her shirt had disappeared, and in its place was a top, almost like a bikini top, made out of scales of the same sort. Her hair, which she would always wear straightened and pulled back in a ponytail, was curly and hanging down around her face. La-a meowed and began licking Lara's tail.

"Here, I'll get it. What happened, anyways?"

"I don't know... Maybe you shouldn't get it cleaned up. It can't do me much more harm to clean it up as I am now, right? If it's genetic or something, you'll be like me."

"Yeah, I guess. But I wonder if it is genetic... Or if it's a freak accident of some sort... Let's see... What did we do yesterday out of the ordinary, that nobody ever really does?"

"We went to that island... And then that happened... That might be it!"

"Yeah... Well, no time like the present to find out..." Just then there was a knock at the door. "Can you make it disappear?"

"I don't know... Can I have a towel?"

"Here. Hurry, try to dry yourself."

"It's not working! I just want to disappear!" With those words, Lara did disappear.

"Are you ok? I can't see you!"

"Yeah, I'm fine. Why?"

"You just disappeared, that's why! Well, I need to go get the door. Try to get dry, and I'm sorry if it's someone from one of my classes- I have to go, I'm really late!" Erin opened the door to find herself face-to-face with her professor.

"I hope that screaming is not going to be a daily occurrence, young lady. I would hate to have to have you two girls evicted."

"No, I'm sorry, it was just a one-time occurrence. I was excited, you see, for my first day of college- I'm doing that summer college thing- and so we began screaming about it at the crack of dawn. I'm surprised it hadn't woken you before then."

"Oh. Well, next time, please keep quiet. I need to sleep to be able to teach bratty college freshmen biology courses."

"Oh, you teach that? That is what I am taking! I am really sorry to have disturbed you, but could it not have been for the better? We are supposed to be at the college five minutes ago- my sister and I were talking and I lost track of time. Please don't mark me late for my first day!"

"If you can get there before me, you will be marked on time. Now go!" It was obvious that she was trying not to laugh.

"Thank you! Bye, Lara! See you after class! Don't get into mischief, and no boys around besides Nathan! Behave yourself!"

"Okay! I won't."

Then Erin ran to the college campus, and made it into her seat just ten seconds before the teacher came in. For some reason, she was the only person in the classroom, and her seat had a water balloon on it. She sat down on the water balloon, not noticing it, and swore when she felt water soaking into her pants. \_At least it's just water- eek, water! What am I going to do? Maybe I should try to turn invisible, like Lara did back at the condo. Nope, not working. Hmm...\_

"Hello? Oh, you're he-" The professor had come in, and now she was staring at Erin's tail. "I've never properly introduced myself. My name is Grace Watsford, but all of my friends call me Gracie. You should do so as well."

"I'm Erin. You won't lock me up or anything, will you? I don't even know how this happened..."

"Well, have you gone anywhere strange recently- Australia or anything?"

"Not Australia, but I did go to that island on Pyramid Lake yesterday. Why?"

"What time was it? And what happened on that island?"

"It was about noon- I went into this cave on the island, and it has a hole in the roof. The few minutes that the sun shone in enough to

make it bright, the water bubbled. I was in the water before that, and I was too tired to get out of the pool in the cave. It began to bubble and turned bright green, like the walls of the cave. Light pink bubbles, about the color of my tail, floated into the top of the cave, but they disappeared before leaving the opening. I don't think anyone else knows about the cave."

"Ok, so the bubbles were pink, you say? Not gold?"

"No, definitely not gold. Besides, I don't think anyone besides my- me has ever been there." Erin was not yet ready to tell that her sister was there with her in the water- that was Lara's decision, not hers. "Why do you ask?"

"I once was a mermaid as well- I had a golden-orange tail, though. I just was curious about why your tail is so different from how mine was. And you say you were alone?"

"My sister was in the cave, but she did not join me in the water. At least, I don't think so- the bubbles enamored me so much, distracted me so much that I would not have noticed someone else in the pool- and I almost feel as though I was hypnotized after I got into the cave- I can remember my actions, but they don't seem to have belonged to me, and I can't remember much else. Why?"

"Two of my friends and I were changed in a pool in Australia- of course, it was salt water- and so I was never alone. Also, we each had different powers. Do you have any new abilities, as of yesterday?"

"I don't know- what were some of yours?"

"Well, try first to make water move- here, this is a beaker of pure water. Do it this way" Then she showed Erin how to do each of the three powers she knew of. Erin could not do any of them. Gracie looked perplexed.

"Maybe you should just try different hand motions- be sure to keep your mind blank as you do this- and it will eventually come to you. It took one of my friends almost a month to figure out her power. It will come to you- just be careful around people."

Erin returned to her condo to find Lara and Nathan there waiting for her. He looked slightly shaky.

"What happened to you guys? What did you do to Nathan, Lara?"

"You guys never told me you two were part fish!"

"That's a- ah- new development. Like, as of today. So I take it you and Lara did something with water while I was out?"

"No- did you see all that rain? It came on sudden-like and I was caught outside in it. Before I could do my disappearing act, I changed in front of Nathan. And then I managed to get it together enough to disappear- after he picked me up. We both became invisible- it was obvious that we were, anyways, because everyone's eyes just kind of passed over us. We came here, and I told him all I knew. How was your day- did you phase fish at all?"

"Yep- exactly ten seconds before the professor came in, I sat on a water balloon. No one was there, except her. I tried to disappear, but it didn't work, and she saw me. Apparently every mermaid has a different power- she was a mermaid once, but it sounds like she's not anymore. I wish I knew what my power was- you have it so easy, you just disappear at will." Erin threw her hands up into the air in exasperation. "I just want to know my power! Is that too much to ask?" Out the window, it began to rain heavily. Erin's eyes widened. "Did I do that? Fat lot of good that'll do me, being able to create rain at will. Whoever came up with irony is probably laughing their heads off at this." Erin suddenly smiled. "But what if I'm immune to this rain? Then, if it looks like it is going to rain, I'll make it rain, and I'll be able to go to school still! This is fantastic!" She stuck her arm out the window. After ten seconds, she had still not changed. "Cool! Does it work for you, Lara?" After sticking her arm out the window and waiting, Lara nodded. Then a queer expression came across her face, and she licked one of the raindrops on her hand, sitting down as she did so. She spat out the water.

"It's salty- like the ocean! We are immune to salt water! Which means that our trip to Hawaii is still on! This is so cool!"

"No pool parties, though. Oh well..." Erin looked a little upset that her power would not allow her to hide. She shrugged. \_At least I won't be stuck inside on a rainy day- which is so rare here in Nevada, that someone could quite easily get suspicious.\_ La-a came into the room, saw Nathan was there, and ran, as Nathan is the one who would trim her claws, and sometimes paint them as well, at the girls' request. She got up to wash her hands for dinner. She was still in the denial stage, so Lara was surprised that, when Erin wet her hands in the sink, she still did not grow a tail. Lara stood up, and then noticed that the water droplets that appeared to bead her skin really floated a teeny bit, almost imperceptibly, above her hands.

"Erin, I think you have another power- I don't think you even realize that you're doing it. Are you thinking at all about getting wet?"

"No. Why would I worry about that when I know I won't? Isn't it cool how my hands appear to be wet, but are really dry? I find it kind of cool." The next few years passed quietly, for the most part. Before long, Lara was going into college, and Erin had graduated and gotten a job in a lab.

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><p><strong>The rest of the story will be from someone's point of view. I am not going to say whose point of view for each chapter, and I will put the location of the person, and have them write some identifying things, such as age or who their sibling is.<strong>

\* \* \*

><p>August 20, 2012<p>

Reno, NV, University of Nevada, Reno!

Well, I'm finally here. Dear diary, I've never written these words before, but I do now- and I plan to continue to do so. You see,

college is going to be very different from High School- which is different from Middle School in a different way. My sister, who has already come here and left, told me that. And she should know... Although getting a tail at the beginning of college probably complicated matters a bit more than my tail at the end of elementary school. She now lives in Western Washington- she works at a cancer research facility, as she has always hoped to do. Most days, she uses her power to make it rain. She said that one of the people in her lab, a woman named Cleo, is even more frightened of water than she is. She parks in the parking garage everyday, and wears gloves and goggles all the time in the lab, even during lunch, although it is not abnormal for people in that building to do so.

Last night, Nathan and I went out to dinner. He was so romantic- I think he will be popping the question soon; we've been going out so long! He has gotten over my secret, even helped me when I was sun struck- since then, every new moon has been rainy, thanks to Erin. Even from Washington, she's able to cover the sun on those days. I don't know what I'd do without her. She's gotten more control over her powers, and now can make it overcast, or just cover up the sun, or do something like that most of the new moons, although when she is sick, I pretend to be ill as well, as I don't know when or if she'll fall asleep and loose control, which will cause me to loose control.

One of Nathan's cousins is coming to town, with his fiancÃ©e. His name is Will, I think. Hers is Bella. They are from Australia. That's what Nay-Nay told me, anyways. He said that they are a cute couple, although a little strange- she's a non-competitive free-water swimmer, and he used to competitively deep dive. They now swim around together. When he said this, I mentally scratched off her being a mermaid- from what Erin told me, anyone who changes into a mermaid tends to not be able to control whether or not they change. We are the exception. We are also the exception on the color of tail- everyone else, apparently, has an orange-gold tail. They sound kind of ugly. But I must not judge. It's sort of unbecoming. Oh, Nathan's back! I wonder what he wants?

\* \* \*

><p>August 20, 2012<p>

Seattle, Washington

A nice, dry ferryboat

Dear diary-

I know I told Emma and Rikki that I'd stop keeping a diary- for the tenth time. But they don't always listen to my problems, and by writing them down, I can sometimes find patterns in them. And, I definitely have a huge problem. I got my dream job- I get to work in a lab. My problem is, just about every day, it rains. Hard. The strange thing is, though, the rain is salty. I can feel it, thanks to my mermaidness. I can't tell why it's like that- I cannot come up with any explanation for it. Lewis can't figure it out, either. So I've just avoiding all water even more. I don't even swim home anymore. Also, I think one of the people in the lab, this girl named Erin, has figured out that something is different about me- but it's been ok, because she has covered for me when it's my turn to wash

dishes- she waits until the lab is empty and then does them for me. I cannot figure out if she knows, or if she was a mermaid. She obviously is not one now- I've seen her park her car each morning, out in the outdoor parking lot, and she actually laughs when she feels the rain on her skin. I can see her practically every morning, laughing. I have no idea why she is like that- although it makes me jumpy, as well as being pretty close to certain that she was a mermaid, and gave it up. She has no boyfriend, no family in the area- the only family member she talks about is her sister, who goes to a university in Reno, Nevada. Once I asked about her parents. She said that to her, they were as good as dead, for all the love and support they gave her. She was quick to add that they did give her plenty of financial support, but she stopped taking it about a month ago, when she got this job, saying that she was sending it to her sister instead, so that she could have a life outside of school. Her sister sent a necklace to her a while back. The gem on it looks like a green version of the gem on mine. They are just as magnetic, if not more so, as the other blue ones- she took hers off to show me, and I sort of wandered around the lab, pretending that I was looking for a window so I could look through it, when I was really seeing if they were magnetic. I had to act quickly to keep them from hitting together when they were an arm's length apart. I don't want to cause a power outage, anyways. That would draw some notice to them. Erin came up behind me, and I told her that it looked so pretty with the sunlight streaming through it. She looked surprised when I asked her if she knew what type of stone it is. I added that I am an amateur geologist, and I find that kind of thing interesting. She replied that she did not know, and had not thought to ask her sister.

I wonder if Kim would do that for me. I know I wouldn't do that for her- she'd spend it all in one fell swoop.

Blue moon in about a week- I'm a little scared, I wasn't moonstruck last time, but I might be this time... That would really suck...

Erin is really young- probably a year or two older than me, but still comparatively young. Together, we halve the average age in our lab while bringing up the average IQ- she is a genius, and is earning her doctorate so that she can take over when the doctor in our lab retires. He's paying for it, because he knows that she will continue his research exactly as he wishes, even when he's gone. I don't think she will, but he can wish, or believe that, if he so wishes. I yearn to just jump off this boat, into the water, and to swim home, but that would arise suspicion when the boat docks, especially since I can't get myself back up. I hope Lewis comes here soon- there is a new opening in a lab on my floor, and he would help me to not go insane.

I also wonder what type of fish there are here. Lewis says that it is safe for me to swim, but I am not sure. What if I end up mutated from all the pollution in the Puget Sound? Anyways, I'm going to go now, because the boat is about to dock, and I need to get back to my car. I wish I could get more easily to my car without getting wet- I've had my windows as darkly tinted as legal, and manage to get in line for the ferry at just the right time every day so as to be within ten seconds of my car, for if the water splashes up. I also take the first and last ferries of the day, so as to cut down on the number of people who could possibly see me. Well, bye now!

\* \* \*

><p>August 20, 2012<p>

Seattle, Washington

The beach

As I lay here on this beach, I wonder if I have my mermaid abilities underwater. I want to try it, but what if someone comes in time to see me dive into the water, and not come back up? I must find a house that is right on the Sound, so that I have my own private beach. I certainly have enough money- my parents found out that I am giving Lara all my money, so they have begun depositing money into my bank account, so much so that I cannot withdraw it all at once without them getting a notice. I will tell them that I want to buy a house by the water, so that I can have a nice view- my apartment is dank and dismal, my mother will understand at least.

I also worry about Lara, every single day that I am gone from her. I moved to Washington a while back, and then began work on my doctorate. I've already gotten it, but it took me such a short time that no one but my sister and my boss, as well as my parents, know that I am already technically Dr. Herold, not Ms. Herold. My parents do not care, Lara has told no one besides Nathan, and my boss pretends to pay for college for me. He knows that I may not continue all that he is working on right now, but he has promised me that he will cause everyone who was in the lab before me to retire before him, and make me his replacement.

There is a strange girl in my lab, Cleo. I think that she may be a saltwater mermaid- she is so scared of water, and I cannot come up with any reasonable explanation for it, other than that. Oh, reasonable explanation is that she is a mermaid! How I laugh at myself sometimes! I pretend to know nothing about mythology, other than what I was supposedly taught in college, but in reality I know quite a bit. I long to test out the freshwater mermaid myths- I found a Native American woman who was the daughter of the granddaughter of a mermaid, and she knew all of the myths of her people about them, because they were such a large part of her family's history. They did not have to keep what they were a secret- sure there were no mentions of them outside of her tribe, due to the fact that they did not want the other tribes coming to their mermaids for help, or to kill them out of spite or jealousy- but inside of her culture, they were important people. However, the State of Nevada bought their island and made it a natural preserve, banning people from going to it, thus killing off the mermaids. She had always hoped to meet a mermaid, and so I told her I was one, and showed her as well. She was ecstatic, because it meant that her culture was not wrong, and that the mermaids would not die away, because young women would still be called there if they were meant to become mermaids. I did not mention the saltwater mermaids to her, because that would mean telling a secret that I have no part in. I also did not mention my little sister, since one mermaid seemed to be enough for her. In return, she told me everything she knew about mermaids- for example, that they could get sun struck on a new moon. Since then, I have always hidden the sun from Lara, although sometimes I forget to do so for myself. If Cleo is a mermaid, then I will make sure to hide the sun from her as well- after all, we should be nice to each other.



I wonder sometimes if Nathan wishes that he could be a merman. I hope, for his sake, that he does not try. There have been very few men who have survived becoming mermen, none in the last 2000 years. So either the gene is gone, as the Y chromosome is disappearing, after all, or we are way overdue for a merman. I really hope, if Nathan does try to become a merman, that it is the latter. According to the Native American woman, the mermen all had green tails, the same color as that of the cave of the sun pool. On full moons, Lara and I sometimes go to Pyramid Lake and swim around, going into the cave through an aquatic entrance. Lara went the last full moon without me, and found a small crystal for me that had fallen off from seismic activity in the area. She said that she had found one as well, and made them into matching necklaces. She sent me mine in the mail, overnight express (that must have cost her an arm and a leg!), and I got it the next day at work. I waited until I got home to open it up, but then I wore it the next day. Cleo seemed really interested in the necklace. I noticed that she has a blue one that is similar, although not quite the same. I am sure that she is a saltwater mermaid, almost 100% sure. Maybe I should try to catch her as a mermaid, alone, of course, and then tell her my secret. But first, I shall find my house on the Sound.

At least it's almost an entire month to the next new moon.

\* \* \*

><p>August 20, 2012<p>

Study Hall in the LLC for Science

This is not a diary- it is a manly journal. Although I don't feel very manly right now- Lara, my girlfriend, is stronger than I am, and more easily able to keep her secret, for all that it is her secret. And if she gets the tiniest bit wet, she'll be showing it to the whole world. Or anyone present, that is. It is bad enough when it rains- she has to make herself invisible, then I carry her around campus in a golf cart, which I bought from a golf course. I pretend like it has too much weight on it, from my textbooks. We figured out how to make it so that, unless it is really windy, the water that comes in is completely salt water. That helps- then she is not invisible, and I'm not the mean guy who won't let people take a ride in my golf cart, because I'm suddenly the really nice guy who drives his girlfriend around campus. Sometimes when it is raining, she lets herself become a mermaid, then covers herself with a blanket or towel, which dries her off enough so that she can go around campus visibly, but that is only when it is sort of late or early, and few people are about. I sort of wish that I were a merman with her sister's powers. I know that I promised both girls that I wouldn't ever go anywhere near the island on a new moon, but I feel it calling to me. Even on non-new moons, I can still feel it. I can tell you exactly what way I am facing, the exact number of nautical miles from the island that I am, the exact distance from the island I am in miles, kilometers, meters, nanometers, you name it, I can tell you the exact distance, down to the trillionth of that unit (further if it is in meters or larger). I could even tell you how many moles of any element there are separating me from it at any given moment. That is how much it is calling me. I know that I am meant to be a merman, but how will I ever explain it to either of the Herold girls? I am in love with one of them, and the other one is like an older sister to me. Heck, the one I am in love with is like a slightly younger sister

to me- yet I am still in love with her, in a very romantic way. I know, and she knows, that we are meant to be together forever- even though we have never dated anyone else, neither of us, ever.

I think that I will surprise her with a long weekend the next time a break and the new moon coincide- of course, I will have to work it out with Erin, and just tell her that Lara misses her, and tell her I am behind in something. Their parents will gladly pay for the trip, and I will have no mermaids breathing down my neck, keeping me from the sun pool. And, if Lara is with Erin, then Erin won't block the sun from shining. I wonder if I can get sun struck as a human, and then say that that is what happened?

And I'll have to find something for Will and Bella to do while I do that- maybe they would enjoy a day where they get to use my car. They got in tonight, and already I see that they are soul mates, much like Lara and I- and no, I do not mean that in any sort of pompous way. I mean it in the nicest of ways. Now all I have to do is get Erin to open up to someone enough to tell them her secret, and they'll eventually get married, and she'll be happy. I wish Michael were still around- for the brief time that they dated, she seemed so happy, but she broke it off when she went to college and he left for -wait- for Washington State, and Gonzaga! Yes! Now I just need to have a chance meeting between them happen- maybe he'd agree to it. He's my best friend, besides the girls, almost like a brother, or at least, he was back then. If I can get back in touch with him, he may still be in love with her, and be willing to have a date with her. I'll warn him that she's changed a little, but nothing big or too fishy (hehe, that would make her mad if she ever found out I told him that... And I'll need to make sure that Lara doesn't look at my emails during that time- easier said than done, although I do need to get an engagement ring for her, I'll just tell her that I don't want her to see the correspondence about it)

Yes, I need to propose. But when, and how?

Possible ways to propose to Lara:

- 1) Show her this list- nah, not romantic enough...
- 2) Hide the ring in her favorite bra- easy enough to do, but again, not romantic- in fact, borderline creeper-ish
- 3) Get down on one knee, like a man, and propose after a fancy dinner at Zozo's
- 4) Basketball game big screen
- 5) At the airport after she gets back from Seattle- say that while she was gone, I realized how much I missed her- yeah, that'll work well!

After quite a bit of time thinking about this- when I really should have been working on homework- I've decided to do 5. It's not as cliché as 3, and not as pressuring as 4, but yet also romantic. I think that I'll tell Erin as well, and then have her come to town with Lara- besides, if I become a merman then, then I'd sort of like to tell her in person, not over video chat or the phone, when anyone could listen in and hear. And a nice quiet room with sound proof walls, like my dorm is not, but the music room, which I can get into

at any time, the professor loves me, is, and therefore is a safe place for me to tell her. And Lara. Of course, I'll drop hints to them, but never much more than a hint- for example, "do you want fish or chicken at our wedding?", or "nothing really fishy has been going on here.", or even "It's been really dry lately- that's kind of cool, right?" probably will get them guessing what happened. They shouldn't be too mad, not if I tell them that I was sun struck. They'll probably understand- they know that the sun pool calls to me, and strongly at that. I wonder if I'll lose that sixth sense- I sort of find it useful, although it is also very annoying, as then I cannot pretend to be lost, or get lost, which is something that I'd like to experience sometime. I've had this sense since I found out the girls were mermaids- since before I could drive, or even was allowed to go anywhere on my bike alone. So I'll try to get sun struck. I'm emailing Erin right now- I am so excited, and I'm really lucky, because the 16th of September is a Sunday- so I'll be able to turn at the next new moon- only problem is that it is a whole month away! Oh well, now time to carry out my plan... And they say most guys don't plan like this! Well, I do- and I'm also a human GPS.

\* \* \*

><p><strong>Thank you for reading this- I hope to have one or two journal entries per chapter. This is chapter one combined with the prologue, which, yeah, I know, is a little off topic from all of the rest of it, but it's for good reason- it gave you guys some sort of crucial information, didn't it?<strong>

\*\*Oh yes, and before I forget:\*\*

\*\*I do not own H2O. I happen to have a couple of OC's in this story, whom I do own, and the OOC moments with the H2O characters are, again, all my thinking. I probably never will own H2O, unless something amazing happens to me, such as winning the lottery.\*\*

\*\*Also, I do not live in Seattle or Reno- I happen to have gotten the chance to tour University of Nevada, Reno Campus, recently, and I personally think it is a beautiful campus, which is why my characters are from there. My inspiration for the whole story was actually from Reno- as we were flying in, I saw a lake, which I found out was called Pyramid Lake. It does have an island on it, and as close to what I found out about it, it is a sanctuary. I know nothing about the local Native Americans, nor do I pretend to- what I wrote was purely imagination.\*\*

\*\*Again, I do not own any of the locations, I have only had the pleasure of seeing them a couple of times, and only some of them at that. I describe Seattle from memory only- no maps, because, although I do not live there, I have been there a reasonable number of times, and I do have friends who live there whom I visit. I know the area, sort of, and therefore have been as accurate as possible- again, I do not own anything in Seattle, although there are many things that I would like to.\*\*

\*\*Thanks again for reading!\*\*

\*\*I am doing something a little different for this chapter, because there is something that I want the reader to see/ read firsthand. There are two journal entries, then a scene, then two more.\*\*

\* \* \*

><p><em>August 24, 2012<em>

\_Ferry boat, on the way to the lab\_

\_Well, just a few more days to the full moon. Half moon tonight. I wonder if Erin has ever gotten moon struck- she was obviously a mermaid at some point, even though she is not now. If she is, I would love to know how she stays human looking, even when she gets wet. The flu has hit our lab, obviously early compared to elsewhere. It will only be her and I in there today. I'm thinking of "accidentally" getting wet in front of her. It might cause her to talk about her experiences, at the very least. I'll deactivate any of the security cameras in the lab, of course. Or go somewhere where they can't get a good image of me. I'll also make sure to answer whatever her questions about me are- as truthfully as possible. She deserves that much, at least. I won't tell Lewis though- not till tonight, at least. Well, wish me luck! \_

\* \* \*

><p><em>August 24, 2012<em>

\_Nice, new house on the Sound\_

\_The other day, I got an email from Nathan. He wants Lara to come up to Washington and join me for a few days in September. I looked at the moon calendar, and it's right at the time of the new moon. I don't think he's planning anything, though- he was asking me if he could borrow some money to buy Lara an engagement ring, and he wants me to claim that I miss Nevada and come back with her, and take pictures when he proposes after we get back. I told him I'd do one better than that- I'd take her engagement ring shopping and get one sized for her, claiming that it is "just looking", then go for a racing swim with her in which I mysteriously fall behind, and go back to buy the ring. I will then overnight express it to him.\_

\_Just a few more days to the full moon, then about fourteen more to the new moon. I'm thinking of telling Cleo today that I'm a mermaid- she obviously is just trying to find the best way to tell me the same news, maybe if I go first, she'll open up. I don't know if she'll believe me, though. I should probably start by talking about mermaids- I won't include anything that is not true, only the true things, such as that they can live on land until they touch water. I think she may be a saltwater mermaid- so I had better not shock her by telling her that I don't change in saltwater, unless I want to. And I should make out that my power is being able to keep water off my skin. I am working on doing so for other things- keeping a table dry, or maybe my gloves, then I'd work on trying to do so for others. I'm thinking that Cleo may be willing to help. Once she knows my secret, anyways. Wish me luck, dear diary! Cleo is obviously a mermaid, but she also obviously is trying to decide if I am one or not.\_

\* \* \*

><p>As Cleo got onto the elevator to the lab, she watched the parking lot out the glass siding. She saw Erin getting out of her car and grabbing a raincoat. <em>Yes, she definitely used to be a mermaid. Now that she has stopped enjoying the rain, she has become completely sane and wears a raincoat, like a normal person. She will be so shocked when I show her.<em>

\_Cleo will have no idea what I'm talking about, at first. Of that I'm certain. Her face is going to be priceless when I show her! I'm lucky that everyone in the lab is ill today- even Dr. Forza is sick today. No one will be coming in unannounced!\_ Erin climbed out of her car. She noticed that it was about to rain, and then realized that she forgot to use her powers to make the rain into seawater. She quickly put on a coat that she kept around for emergencies, and then concentrated on staying dry as she walked over to the building. She got onto the elevator and dropped the shield after she closed the door and was on her way up to her floor, the second one. She practically ran to her lab, and came in just as Cleo was getting ready to show her. She knew what was about to happen, and thought to herself that it was not going to happen. Before she knew it, she had a shield like hers around Cleo's hands, which never received a single drop of water on them. Cleo looked shocked when she realized that even sticking her hands under the water would not make her turn into a mermaid.

"Beautiful day, isn't it?" Cleo spun around. "Although, personally, I would love a little less rain- it makes it harder for me to get to work, you see. I watched the most interesting documentary last night- it was on mythical creatures. Isn't that something interesting? There was only a few minutes on mermaids, but, as mermaids were my favorite mythical creature when I was younger- still are, as a matter of fact- I know an awful lot about them already. Like, that they usually have two legs and look completely human- until the moment they get wet, that is." By now Cleo was looking at Erin completely shocked. "Why not you sit down? You see, I have a reason for mermaids being my favorite mythical creature- other than being sun struck, it is the best thing to happen to someone, ever. Wouldn't you agree?"

"Yeah, I guess... I've never really thought about it like that..." \_Just agree with her, Cleo. C'mon, she doesn't even have her facts right. She doesn't know! She never was a mermaid- no mermaid that I know of gets sun struck.\_

"I thought you would. It's the best feeling in the world, swimming in water far longer than any mere human could. Although I am curious- are you freshwater or saltwater? I'm freshwater. My tail is pink. Do you want to see?"

"Uhh... Yeah, I guess." \_Ok, she has officially lost it. No one can become a mermaid in freshwater- I've never met one, and I'm somewhat of a mermaid magnet.\_ Erin sat down on a stool that she had drug over to the sink, and placed her hands under the water. After ten seconds, she turned greenish and transparent, like Cleo had done so many times- \_Or have I? I turn blue, not green...\_- and then reappeared with a pink tail, just like she had said she would.

"Tah-dah! What do you think, Cleo?"

"Cool. Do you have any sorts of powers- you seem ok with water, and

I've seen you get wet before."

"No, you have not seen me get wet- my power is to make it seem like I got wet, but I really keep the water about a tenth of a micrometer from my skin, or anything that attaches to my skin, such as hair. I did it to you when I came in- you see, you have much more to learn from this than me, as one of my professors was once a saltwater mermaid- a woman named Gracie Watsford. Apparently her family thinks she is dead, because of some miscommunication, as well as someone who could very well have been her stunt double dying. People thought it was her, as they both had the same name, and the other lady was quite obscure amongst the community."

"Wow... That is honestly a lot of information to take in. Does anyone else know, besides Gracie?"

"My sister and her boyfriend know, as does this old Native American woman. She was the one who warned me about getting sun struck."

"You trusted your sister and her boyfriend?"

"Yes- my sister has the same secret, and her boyfriend happened to find out the same day as us, as she was with him the second time she changed. Ever since then, the island that we changed on has been calling to him."

"What is this 'sun struck' business?"

"We became mermaids on the new moon, and ever since then, we have had the possibility of getting sun struck on a new moon, if we look at the sun, or even near it. I tend to make it rain or be overcast those days."

"Do you ever get moonstruck? It sounds like it is a lot like that, but on a full moon by looking at the full moon."

"No. Is that what saltwater mermaids have happen?"

"Yes. Can you protect me from this full moon? I fear that it will be a special full moon, seeing how it is a blue moon."

"Sure. You have to look at the moon to be affected, correct?"

"Yes. And can you make it cloudy all around the world- that may help many mermaids to not get moon struck?"

"Of course."

Cleo then fingered one of the scales on Erin's tail.

"Careful, I don't know about you, but when I get wet, I tend to become wet all over, even if it is just a drop on my fingertip."

"Oh... No... not good..." Cleo sat down half a second before she became a mermaid herself. Erin slid down from the chair and sat down next to her. "Wait, if you become wet all over, how do you get dry?"

"I sort of push the water out of my body- it's not as dangerous as it

sounds, and then turn it into saltwater, which doesn't change me unless I wish it to do so. Or, I just turn it into saltwater to begin with, but that leaves me slightly dehydrated and dry the next time I change."

"Salt water has no effect on you? Is that why the rain became salty suddenly- I can feel it in my skin, it became more salty and less polluted."

"Correct." Then Erin turned the water on her into saltwater, saying that she was taking a bath that night anyways; she'd get nice and moist then. She reverted to her human form, and stood up. Cleo watched it all enviously.

"You are so lucky to be able to do that- all I can do is this." And she pulled out all of the excess water, that which her body did not need and was just sitting on the surface of her body, and became human as well. She casually tossed the ball of water into the sink and watched it swirl down the drain. It was Erin's turn to watch enviously.

The rest of the day passed quietly for the two mermaids. They each went about their daily business, although when Erin offered Cleo a chance to see her house, Cleo agreed, and was all the more excited when Erin mentioned that it was on a private saltwater beach.

The two women went over to Erin's house right after work, and sat and talked about life as mermaids. Cleo did not mention Rikki or Bella, although she did accidentally mention Emma when she was talking about when Emma tried to dye her hair, as Erin talked about a time where her sister needed her help to dye her hair, as she wanted to look different for a while. Problem was, Erin turned the water to saltwater, which reacted to the dye, making Lara's hair bright purple instead of brown. Lara never dyed her hair after that.

Both girls went for a swim around dusk. It was Erin's first extended amount of time in the water, and she found it to be quite exciting. Although she did not want a tail, she did retain her abilities as a mermaid- she could still swim just as quickly as Cleo, and held her breath for even longer, without even feeling like she was anywhere near the end of her oxygen supply. Both girls agreed that it was quite fun swimming around like that, but they had to get home. Cleo swam home- her house, ironically, was exactly parallel to Erin's house, across the Sound. They arranged for Cleo to meet Erin at her house when they were both awake that next morning, and they would talk more then.

However, Cleo had a surprise awaiting her when she arrived home, which she wrote about in her journal.

\* \* \*

><p><em>August 25, 2012<em>

\_My writing desk\_

\_When I got home last night, Lewis was there waiting for me. He was in front of my house, and so it took a while for him to realize that I was home, as I went in the backdoor, not wanting any of my neighbors to look and see that my car was not in the driveway when I

came up to my house. I turned on the living room light, which caused him to turn around and walk up my front steps. I quickly texted Erin that I was home, and that my boyfriend had just arrived to see me, as a surprise, then went and opened the door. Lewis grinned at me. I hugged him, then stepped aside so that he could come in. He was, thankfully, alone.\_

\_He asked me how I was. I replied that I was doing well, and that I had missed him. I did not mention Erin to him, because I did not think she'd appreciate it.\_

\_He got down on one knee as he said "Cleo, this is something that I have been wanting to ask you for a while now. I have gotten your father's permission, now all I need is your consent. Will you marry me?"\_

\_I gasped. And then began crying. I hugged him and yelled, "yes, yes, yes! I love you too!" I knew my neighbors would be coming soon to yell at me for making such a noise, but I was so happy. I would not be surprised if Erin heard me, as I am pretty sure that I saw a small glimpse of a pink tail, which is so light that it almost glows in the dark. Lewis looked at me, worried.\_

\_"Are you sure? You are crying! Are you ok?"\_

\_"Yeah- why wouldn't I be ok? I'm crying because I am so excited! You've finally asked me! I've been waiting and waiting for you to do so... I love you, Lewis. And I know I want to marry you." With those words, I kissed him.\_

\_I am so excited for our wedding- I will sneak over to Erin's, and we will video chat with the girls and plan the wedding together. The five of us. Lewis does not need to be a part of it, for today... Because it'll include the wedding dress planning today, of course! I'm so excited! Off to Erin's I go! With you, of course, dear diary! I do not want Lewis to find out about Erin...\_

\* \* \*

><p><em>August 25, 2012<em>

\_The beach\_

\_When Cleo came over today, I did sort of expect the news she gave me- I had noticed a guy in her front yard earlier that evening, and so I stayed around to watch what he did to her. I did not tell her, because I thought he might know her, and that could make her upset. I think she may have seen me watching for her, but I am not sure. But I am sure that Lewis is now her fiancÃ©e. She was so excited when she came over here- and I'm excited for her.\_

\_But for one problem. I used to date- before I became a mermaid. Now I don't, because I don't think a guy would want to date a freak, once he found out, if they were not already together and in love. That's why it worked for Cleo- they both had been crushing on each other since forever, and so the mermaid thing didn't change how they felt. With Nathan and Lara, they were best friends before they were even a year old, and they have remained that way ever since. But I've had no one like that- except Michael, but it took us so long to finally get together, and it was so awkward that it could never have lasted, even



though we both had feelings for each other. Now, our relationship would be even more awkward, yet I sort of hope that he'll somehow come back into my life. I don't care how- I don't even care if Lara makes Michael meet up with me "accidentally" at some point. I just want to see if I can make that relationship work enough for me to someday have the same excitement as Cleo, the same as Lara will soon have (less than a month; I'm so excited for her!).\_\_

\_I want someone to love me in a way that I can return my love to them. \_

\_And I would love for him to be smart, funny, nice, handsome, and, most importantly, understanding and caring. I think Michael fits all those requirements- he's tall, has dark hair, green eyes, maintained a 4.0 throughout high school, he has always cared about me, and how my life is going. I think he may be the one, although I was too shy to ask him out, and he took a while to ask me out, because he is so shy. But when we finally got to the non-awkward part of our relationship, it was the best thing ever. He was in love with me, and I was in love with him. I was glad that he had already left for college when I turned into a mermaid- I don't think I could have hid it from him that well, seeing as we would have seen each other that next day. He probably would have been in that classroom with me.\_\_

\_I wonder how he is doing, and if I will ever see him again. I hope so- he is probably the best guy for me, and if I never see him again, I will never know if we could have worked out. At least I can use my power to make me seem as though I am normal, if he does ever want to tell the world about me. I could make him look like a complete lunatic.\_\_

\_And yet I love him, and deep down, I know that if he never accepts me for who I am, I will never accept myself. That's probably part of the reason why I haven't had a relationship in the last few years. I'm scared of what I will find out about myself.\_\_

\_After Cleo introduced me to Emma, Rikki, and Bella, I decided that, as Cleo knows, they should know who I am as well. So I told them. They seemed surprised, and Emma kept on saying that I had it backwards. So I showed them, which made Emma stop, at the very least. I think I have a few new friends now that they know- I certainly know that they are not going to turn into my enemies. I told them that they'd never have to fear a full moon again, and, unless it was pouring buckets, a sudden rain shower that causes it to be impossible for them to get to work. I did add that I had to have some warning, such as "Oh, it looks like it's going to rain in such and such a place today. I wish it were dry..."\_\_

\_I'm so excited for Cleo- as we were talking, she kept on looking at the ring on her finger, as though it just seemed to be too much to take in all at once. I think I know the feeling. The first time I stayed dry, I was so shocked that it took me about ten minutes to "turn it off", as Lara put it.\_\_

\_I like how my life is right now- Cleo just introduced me to Lewis a few minutes ago. We had agreed beforehand that I would tell him that I am a mermaid later- once I've stopped seeming so strange to him. It will take some getting used to, having a guy back in my life. I just wish September would hurry up and come already- I want to see Lara.\_\_

\* \* \*

><p><strong>Thank you for reading this! Please review it- I like reviews!- be it good or bad. I know that this is sort of the same as some of the other ones on here, but most of the ideas are my original ones, meaning that it should end up a little differently. I will get to Lara and Nathan in the next chapter, as well as Will and Bella. If you review, I may be slightly more inclined to put up the next chapter sooner, which I do almost have done, I just have to edit it.<strong>

### 3. Chapter 3

August 27, 2012

Lara's dorm room

I was shown by the people in the exchange program to a dorm room when I asked to see Lara Herold. When I arrived there, I found a girl who looked an awful lot like Erin. I began to wonder if they were related- Will and Nathan are related, but not siblings, and they look similar. If Will were to dye his hair white blond, and buy colored contacts that make his eyes the same color as Nathan's (deeply brown, and with strange green flecks), then they would look exactly alike.

I asked Lara if there was a place that I could go for a swim, to which she replied the pool. I then specified that, as I hate chlorine, I'd like to go to a lake or something, to which she responded that she and some of the other girls were going to take a trip next weekend to Salt Lake City, if I wanted to join them. I told her that I would, but that I would like to go swim before then. I almost forgot that I was not talking to Erin, and almost added that I wanted to go somewhere private, where I could stretch my tail out, but luckily I didn't. I did call her Erin by accident. She looked confused.

"That's my sister. Do you know her?"

"One of my friends got engaged recently. She called me up on video chat, and Erin was there, because she wanted to talk about dresses. I thought you looked like her- same color eyes, although her hair is longer and redder, as you probably know quite well."

"Yep, that's my sister. Always making friends and never telling me. After all, I'm just her little sister." At this Lara laughed. I have no idea why.

Just then, Will and Nathan walked into the room. Will came over to me and began playing with my hair, while Nathan went over to Lara and flung a magazine at her.

"Don't leave those in my room- or my bathroom, for that matter! I don't care that I am the only person you know of on campus with a bathtub! If you leave your magazines there, you won't be allowed back to my bathroom for your daily baths! I don't care why you feel you need them- you can't come over if you don't pick up your stuff!"

"Fine! I will next time- besides, it's not like you don't benefit as well! You get to see my tai- play with my bra, making it into a slingshot!" It sounded like she said tail- but she couldn't have, that's her sister, and I've never met a family with two mermaids in it, like that, at least. I guess, if one is a fresh water mermaid and one is a saltwater mermaid, that could work. But I'd find that to be way too coincidental. So she can't be a mermaid.

And I'm still looking for a place to safely swim.

August 27, 2012

My Dorm Room

Great, now the new girl is onto me. Right when she looked up, I went to the bathroom and set my watch to go off in about a minute. When it went off, I stated that I wanted to write in my journal, because I always do so at the exact same time, and, as she was a little late, I needed to or I would flip out. Through it all, Nathan nodded at me- he knew that if I didn't write it down that I had almost let the secret slip, I would flip out and begin screaming. About mermaids and new moons. Which would be quite obvious and weird.

So anyways, here I am. Writing to you. This feels weird... And I almost think that she has a secret of her own. Erin did not tell me much about saltwater mermaids- she said that if I needed to know about them, then the opportunity would present itself. I think it has now- she certainly is no freshwater mermaid, or else she wouldn't be so scared of a Salt Lake City trip- she'd just control whether or not she became a mermaid in the water. Erin did tell me that we retain our speed and breathing capacity- maybe that's what she is scared of, accidentally showing off (or swimming off)...

What bugs me most is that Erin did not see fit to tell me that she had met new people- sure, she may have thought that I wouldn't meet them anytime soon, but still, she should tell me about any new, close friends. Those who can find out or know about her secret. Our secret- because with one slip-up, they find out that she changed with her sister, or that her sister is a mermaid- is not supposed to be something that she tells to just anybody. She has only told two people, so far as I know- her teacher and that Native American lady. Well, she didn't tell her teacher, just like I didn't tell Nathan... But I guess it's ok...

Wait, she never told me her teacher's name. I wonder who it is- and if I'll have her. I'll have to be careful- she could be anyone, and if she figures out who my sister is, she'll be onto me, as Erin did say that she told her that I was in the cave with her at the time of the transformation. Just not in the water.

This sucks- barely even started school yet, and people are already onto what my secret is. And I thought it would be easier without a roommate- at least with one, my boyfriend can't bring in his cousin and his cousin's fiancée, as that is just awkward. Then we could go to a nice café, or maybe Legends, that new mall... And then I can get wet and show the whole world my secret. On second thought, no thank you. I'm glad that the only picture of myself that I'm a mermaid in is glued securely into the back of this journal- otherwise, I'd fear I'd lose it.

Knock on wood- on the glued part. Its cruddy glue- and the picture just fell out...

Oh, God no!

August 27, 2012

Lara's Dorm Room

I know that I never wanted to write in a journal around girls, but Will is kind of being non-communicative, and I'm bored, so I'm typing this on my phone. I wish the new moon were here today-less than a month (if it were a month, then the new moon would be right around the corner, and I'd be much happier), yet way more than two weeks- almost three, just a day shy of being three exactly. But I still yearn for it. The girls have never even let me anywhere near the pool- and so I don't know what it looks like, other than the one picture in Lara's journal.

Of course, what Lara doesn't know won't hurt her- on this very phone, hidden in the same folder as this journal, I have a few pictures as well. I find her tail so mesmerizing- it's so beautiful. Don't get me wrong- I'm no sun struck mermaid- I like legs too- it's just that everything about Lara is so amazing. She's an amazing woman, and I want to spend the rest of my life with her- and I want to share the rest of my life with her. I don't want there to be a part of her life that I've never experienced (unless, of course, she is pregnant- I do not want to be a pregnant merman, as that would cause way too many questions) with her (and that's where I make up for it- I'm always there for her. That's why I drive the golf cart for her, why I carry an umbrella in the bottom of my bag, why I listen to her when she tells me to stop doing something, or to exercise. She's the only person I want to be with).

Wait- what's that? I didn't know she kept paper in her jour- the picture!

Oh, God, no!

August 27, 2012 (well, more like 9:30 on August 27, so sort of late)

Mine and Lara's Dorm Room

Well, at least my roommate and I have no secrets. I was right when I thought I heard tail. Because- guess what?- my roommate is a mermaid. Like me. And, better yet, she doesn't change in saltwater. Guess what there is an abundance of here, in Reno? Not saltwater, that's for sure! I feel sort of sorry for her. She said that her sister knows- she didn't seem to know about her sister, although that could be because she doesn't know that I know about her.

I never knew that being a mermaid could run in families like this. I guess we just don't know because we've never tried having Emma or Cleo's siblings in the Moon Pool- because, seriously, who would want sweet Elliot to have to go through that, and who would want bratty Kim always with them, always on the brink of exposing them? Not me, that's for sure.

I guess Rikki and I are lucky- we have no siblings, no one to keep away from the Moon Pool. Although I guess she does have Zane, and I have Will... Although I doubt Will needs to become a merman to swim with us (as long as we swim slowly, anyways.), and he probably would have his own sister sell him for money if she ever found out. Which means that she'd find out about me- I'd never let Will be alone like that- and then figure out who else is a mermaid, revealing our secret to the whole world.

And Zane- somehow, I don't see him becoming a merman, as he'd probably end up exposing himself, then earning the money from selling himself and anyone who happened to be nearby. I know that they are back together, but I don't like him much- even though he cares about Rikki, I don't think that he cares about anyone else.

Sometimes this whole secret thing gets too hard to juggle. Maybe Nathan will be able to help- he obviously knows just as much as Lara, if not more. I think that Erin told him something more, something that she didn't tell Lara.

Cleo and I have decided to have a double wedding, here, in the States. Only our families and close friends (aka Rikki and Emma, probably also the Herold girls (although they are almost family- I think that Nathan is contemplating popping the question to Lara)) will be there. I want to do a beach wedding, because Erin can apparently keep us dry. Cleo has agreed to it.

I'm going to go dress shopping with Lara on Saturday. I'm so excited! We will probably pick out bridesmaids dresses...

Or maybe I'll go to Seattle to see Cleo and meet Erin officially. Well, I'd better be off- Lara told me that I could tell my friends that she is a mermaid. And that's exactly what I plan to do. And then she said that we could go swimming in a lake.

August 28, 2012 (Well, it's only 11:50- so it's still technically August 27- but I won't be done with it in 10 minutes. So here goes):

Bella looked at the picture as it fluttered out of my journal. Her eyes widened when she noticed the tail. They became even wider when she realized that it wasn't a black and white photo.

"Your tail is pink?" She quickly closed her mouth.

"Yeah- do you have a problem- wait- the way you said that, and the fact that you aren't shocked- are you a mermaid too?"

"Aye. And you are also a mermaid? That is not any type of photo shopping?"

"Yep. I'm a mermaid- and no humans know this besides the two standing in this room- unless, Will, you are a merman or other unspecified non-human, such as a werewolf or vampire?"

"No- completely human. Just like my cousin."

I didn't say how much like his cousin he was- they look identical, except for their hair. Nathan has white blond hair, while his is a little darker. Underwater, Nathan's hair is sort of transparent yet

also somehow gets some reddish coloring. Oh, and their eyes- Nathan's are obviously green to me, but some people call them brown. They are about the same color as some of the algae that I've swum amongst. I find them bottomless and beautiful. I find everything about him beautiful- his hair, his eyes... his stomach... his personality most of all, though. He's the perfect guy- and I am in love with him.

I think soon that he will be completely mine- I would love that. He asked me if I wanted to go to Seattle sometime, to see Erin. I told him yes, but only if I wasn't alone on the flight. I hate sitting alone on flights- I always end up next to that annoying person who spills their drink in my lap, and I have to get up, climb over them, then run down the aisle, becoming invisible as I do so, for in case I become a mermaid. Most soda is too salty for me to change, but I always end up next to the one person on the plane who actually wants water. Sometimes that has enough salt and minerals, but it usually doesn't.

I envy Erin.

Anyways, back to my story-

Nathan is completely human- well, he claims that he is part GPS, and never gets lost, so he might be... But he could just be lucky.

"Ok, then. What color is your tail?"

"Bronze or copper, I guess you'd probably call it. I think that a different color would be kind of cool- but for someone else, not me. I've had this tail for quite a while now- it's become a part of me. What's your power?"

In answer, I held up my hand and made it become invisible. I've been working on it, and I now can almost keep an illusion of me in my human form while I'm invisible in my mermaid form. I can also make people forget that I was there, and then, when I reappear, make them forget that I disappeared. I can't change anything around it, though.

"Yours?" I asked when Bella's eyes widened.

"Please get me a cup of water. I can't explain it, but if you see it you'll understand it." I went and got a cup of water. She gelatinized it, then Will took some out of the cup. The stuff he took out, she hardened. I could feel my eyes growing wider by the second.

When she looked up, she laughed at my expression. "'Course, it's nothing compared to what you can do. I assume you can do more than just your hand?"

"Yeah, of course. And if someone is holding onto me, or I concentrate really hard and they are nearby, I can make someone else invisible. I have to concentrate to make them not invisible if they are holding onto me. That's how Nathan found out. I discovered my tail, then very shortly after figured out that I could become invisible. My exact words to my sister were something like "I wish I could just disappear!" and then... I did."

"Umm... Lara..."

"What, Nathan?"

"Are those words a trigger or something? I can't see you..."

"Oh. Ok..." I guess I became visible again. They all looked at me, anyways. I guess I do sort of pace around, and I was on the opposite side of the room from where I disappeared.

We continued to talk like this for quite a while- it was almost dinnertime when we next looked at the time. Bella offered to move into my dorm- as I had no one with me, she needed a place to live, and since she planned on staying and getting a degree in Music Theory. Will and Nathan went back to his dorm, where Will was staying temporarily (Will wanted to try living in Lincoln Hall, as it is closer to campus.).

After dinner, Bella and I went back up to our room. We closed and locked the door, then each of us grabbed a glass and filled it with water. There was something we both knew we had to do. Without a word to each other, we dropped some water onto ourselves and waited ten seconds. Exactly at ten seconds, we both grew tails. We were both sitting on my bed, and I had a towel underneath myself.

"Why is your tail so slimy looking?"

"It keeps a layer of freshwater on it- if I go into saltwater, it continually removes the salt from the water, keeping my tail from getting salty. If I wait for it to dry by air, it takes all night. If I use a towel, such as I have here, it takes no time at all- if the water from my tail does not touch my legs, or my tail, then I don't change. So, I could touch another mermaid's tail and not change. Unless I, like, kick it or something."

"You're so lucky- for me, it's touch water, ten seconds later (unless I'm dry by then) I have a tail."

"Oh- I'd actually kind of like that. You see, I never really know if I'm going to change or not. If there is enough salt or other stuff in the water for me to change. You at least know that if you get wet, you need to book it out of there, because you're going to grow a tail. I don't- and it's taken me by surprise a couple of times. No one has ever noticed, besides Nathan. And he's my boyfriend, so he should notice stuff like that." We were both almost dry by that point- me, from rubbing dry with the towel and Bella from the hot, dry, Nevada air.

"Alright, then. That is a little annoying. What do you do when it rains? Go invisible?"

"No- it hardly ever rains here, and I take enough days off that I can pretend to be sick on the rainy days, as well as overcast days, that people just think it is seasonal depression. The snow actually makes me turn into a blue-tailed mermaid. It's an icy blue, not a blue like your necklace. It's cool, by the way. Looks sort of like mine. I got my pendant from the cave. You?"

"I got it in Ireland, when I turned into a mermaid. My friends and I all have one. They're magnetic. Is yours magnetic to mine?" I placed my necklace close to hers- and they snapped together. We both are drawing blanks- all we saw was a bright golden light that was glowing

brighter and brighter and brighter. Next thing we knew, Nathan was waving his hand in between our faces (I gave him a key to my dorm- who knew what would happen if I spilled water all over myself one morning?). We both blinked, then looked at him.

"You just made the power in this building and a few of the other nearby buildings go out. Or, at least, your necklaces did. Your room was the only one with light in it- everyone else was either asleep or doing something productive. Those that were being productive are now annoyed with the school- I'm the only person who saw that light. It was beautiful... But you should go somewhere else before playing around with it."

"Ok- race you to the cave!" I had a car- we were able to race after we reached the lake. "I know where we can change without anyone seeing us!"

"Ok!" We both got into my car- I kicked Nathan out, saying that he would need a boat to get to the island, and the rent-a-boat center was currently closed. We weren't even supposed to be there. As we climbed out of the car, I noticed the moon. It was almost full- not quite, but I'd need to moon proof our room soon. Bella also seemed to notice it.

We both dove into the water, and she swam next to me, keeping up for the most part. When we arrived in the cave, her eyes widened.

"This looks exactly like a greener version of the moon pool! And you call it a sun pool, correct?"

"Yeah. Well, lets dry off and try our necklaces. Unless you have a reason to just dry off, take them off, then get wet again?"

"Aye, that would be kind of cool." So that's what we did.

When we put our necklaces together, a stream of light came up out of them. I think it may have gone through the hole in the top of the cave, but I could be wrong. We were both kind of out of it. We had both set our phones down on the floor of the cave, in case Nathan or Will needed to contact us.

But I never thought that Erin would.

But she did.

"Lara, what are you doing? The column of light that I'm assuming you've created has made the news here- as well as elsewhere in the world. Cleo's friend Emma is freaking out. Rikki, another of her friends is freaking out. And we can't get a hold of Bella, her third really close friend. But I bet that she is-"

"Not freaking out. She is right next to me, Erin. So don't worry. And we've stopped. I didn't realize that the column of light was that big... And that's just with two necklaces..."

"What?"

"Never mind- I gotta go. As you obviously know, I'm at the sun pool. And school will be here before I know it- and so I need to go. So I'll text you when I get back to my dorm. See ya later!"



"See you later?!" I know that she phrased that more as a question, but I decided that what I needed right then was an excuse to hang up- and being clueless is something I often use as an excuse.

"Thanks, I knew you'd understand! Talk to you back at my dorm! Bye!" I hung up. I then turned to Bella.

"Well, apparently our little experiment is now an international affair. Would you like to explain it to our boyfriends, or shall I?"

"To each her own, I guess... I reckon that Nathan is going to pitch big enough of a fit for you to have trouble handling him and Will. I would like to see Nathan's reaction, but if I can see him, it's not a safe distance... Maybe you should text him from here."

"Or maybe you could just tell him what the international affair you speak of is." I looked up. Nathan and Will were both standing over us. Will looked like he was trying not to laugh. Nathan looked like he was trying not to strangle me. "There are going to be people swarming all over this island now, Lara. Do you know what that means, with the next new moon only a few weeks away? It means that if someone can find this cave, and happen to come on September 16, which is, again, mere weeks away- it won't blow over that quickly- then bang- instant mermaid. Or merman. Or whatever."

"You could come looking on that day- keep the pool safe."

"Or you and Bella could leave for somewhere else until this blows over. That is what I'd prefer."

"No- I'll go closer to the new moon. You said that I was going to Seattle- why not Bella and I go together, and you and Will could stay and guard the cave? I could ask Erin to keep it overcast- and, unless a someone is destined to become a mermaid, it will remain so."

"Ok then." Nathan's frown had disappeared. I found that strange- it was almost as though he were anticipating me leaving, growing increasingly excited for me to leave. Which makes no sense. Oh well.

Moving on with my story-

Just then, I saw some flashlight beams going around the tunnel.

"Quick, in here! I'll try to make us all invisible- grab onto me, and don't let go!" As soon as everyone had grabbed onto me, I closed my eyes and made us all invisible. I've discovered quite a bit about the invisibility- for example, people do not hear you unless you want them to, and they cannot see you unless they know why you are hiding, who you are, what you are and all this other stuff that only Erin knows about me. She couldn't see me that first time because she did not know why I was hiding- or, for that matter, what I was. Well, she suspected, but I didn't know what I was until she confirmed it for me. I guess it was a good thing- because if she could have still seen me, then she would not have gotten the door, and tried to dry me off. Then she would have been really late to class.

So I just sat there, holding the dishtowel, wishing to be able to be seen again. Soon, L-a came over and licked my tail. It tickled and felt sort of awkward- but she is an awkward cat. Really awkward. My parents had to take her with them to New York to keep her out of my dorm room when I moved in. We still own the condo, but I wanted to try the dorm rooms- because otherwise, how would I convince my friends to come over for study dates.

I sometimes drive across town to the condo to take a bath. Our condo is huge- it has a pool. Ever since we changed, it's been a saltwater pool. Our parents have too much money to know what to do with it. They make so much money that they insisted that we go to Catholic schools in the area, and they already give about half of it to the Catholic Church, half to Our Lady of Wisdom (where our Newman Center is) and half to Little Flower, our home church. So a lot of money is given away, but we still have way too much. My parents have put together bank accounts for Erin and I, and we are already really rich, even though they've only been putting a quarter of all of their money in their paychecks into our accounts- which leaves them with a quarter of their paychecks to live off of.

So money has never been a problem. And I sort of hate my parents. Even when I was little, if I wanted to be close to them, they'd think that I was lacking human company, and arrange play dates or tell me to go play with Erin. So that is what I would do, although I'd be hurt that my parents wanted nothing to do with me. They even got four different nannies for us- after we both had passed fourth grade! Which meant that Erin was already in high school- almost able to drive! After she started driving, my parents got rid of the nannies, thank God. Otherwise, I do not think that our secret would have been much of a secret anymore...

To say sorry, they bought us a condo that was a loft, sort of- but the opposite of a loft. We had a smaller ground floor, which we shared with a few other people, where our kitchen, living room and dining room all were, then we had a spiral staircase that led up three floors, stopping on each floor. Top floor was where our bedrooms are. Next floor is the pool- and it is an Olympic sized pool, mind you. The third lowest floor is the closet, as well as the guest rooms, the game room and the office/homework room, although we have computers on every floor of the house, as well as printers. We even had an empty room, which Erin made into a dance studio. It is on the ground floor, and she taught little girls dance classes down there. Instead of a recital, she made a movie with them through the session, where they would do ballet, tap, irish, and sometimes other things (she isn't into jazz too much, and she has never taught a hip-hop class, although she did do some cheer) and that was how she made her income. She tried to teach me how to dance, but I prefer the flying with a saddle on the back of a horse to that of doing repetitive motions that wear out your knees quickly.

After I found out my abilities, it was a much better life for me. I never had to talk to those bratty girls again, and the mothers thought that I had just moved out on my own or something.

Erin was furious. Just like she will be when she hears the rest of this story-

So, we were hiding. As I hoped, no one knew me or my secret, and we remained safe. The people soon left the cave, and Bella and I pushed

the boys out of the pool. We then arranged to meet back at the dorms, in mine and Bella's room.

Bella and I did not run into any problems on the way back, but the boys did. Will and Nathan were able to explain being out there in the middle of the night by stating that they had been on a camping trip and were just boating around when their boat ran out of fuel, so they stopped at the island to call their families to come pick them up and tow the boat. While Nathan was covering for himself and Will, who had pretended to have the need to go to the bathroom, Will dove under the water and drilled the gas tank to the boat, catching the oil in a bucket that he then swam the twenty yards to shore to hide in some bushes. He was back by the time that the officers were beginning to get suspicious, and so he acted like he had seen something and fallen overboard, even yelling "hey, over here! Help me out!" When asked what he saw, he responded that he had seen a mermaid. Which means no swimming for Bella and I, at least, not there, and not visibly. It also means that the men think he is a nutcase. Maybe we should dye our hair or something, then swim around there, so that it is obvious that he is not a nutcase. Maybe let ourselves be caught on camera. I've always wanted to try dying my hair, and this would be perfect. I could dye it before Erin even finds out that I am planning on dying it, and even if it is a horrid dye job, I at least will be able to have it only when I swim, and I could swim invisibly. I convinced Bella in the time span of about five minutes that this was a good idea, and we went out and bought hair dye. I bought black, and Bella chose to get some sort of bleaching thing to make it white. Like paper white.

We then went over to my condo, and dropped off the dye. We decided that we would do the actual dyeing on Wednesday, which is tomorrow, so that we both had no classes, as this quarter we both have Tuesday Thursday classes. So now I need to sleep, to actually be awake tomorrow.

End  
file.